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SIDMOUTH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

of the



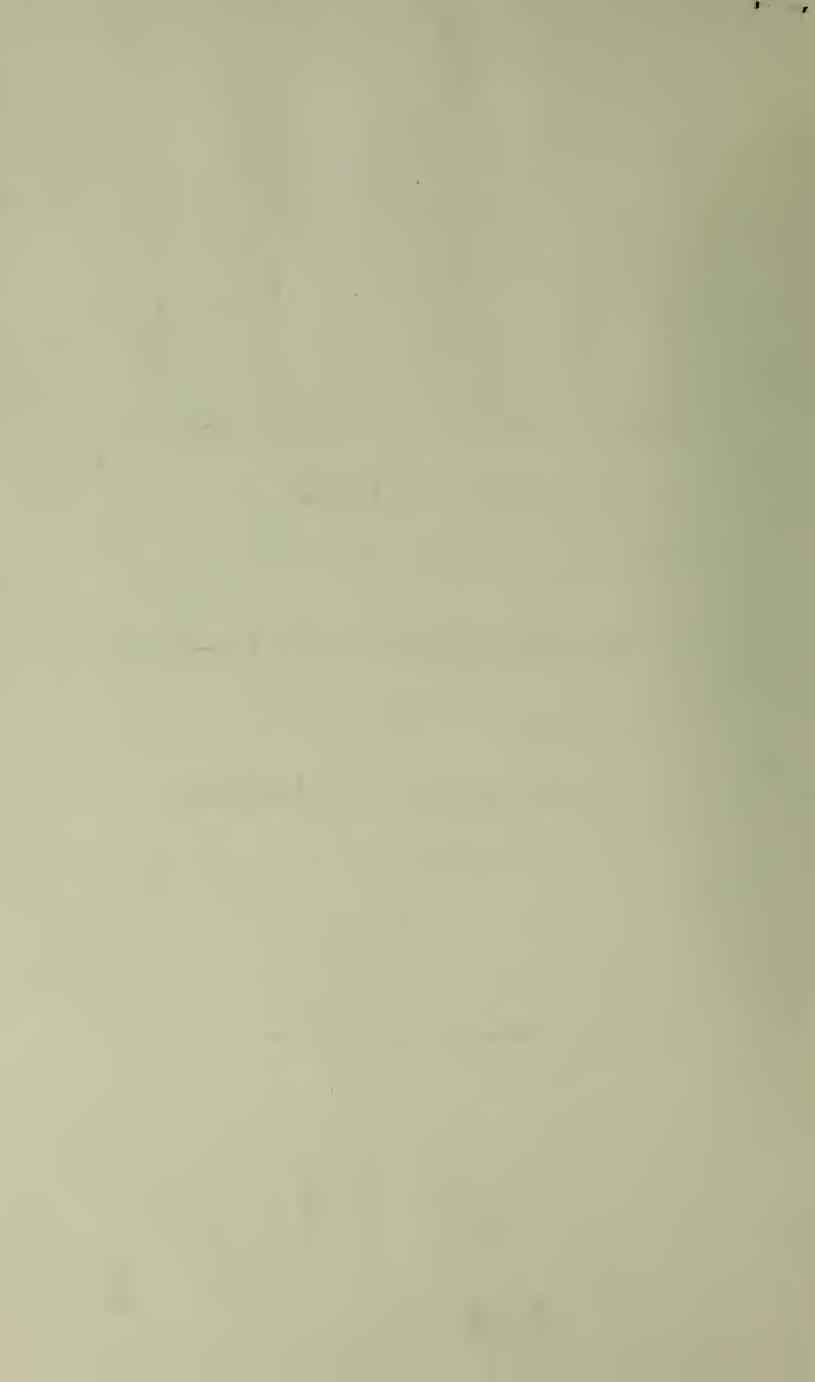
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

and

CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR

for the year

1955



SIDMOUTH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1955.

To the Chairman and Members of the Sidmouth Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman and Members,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the public health of the Urban District for the year ending 31st December, 1955.

The report conforms as closely as possible to the requirements of the Ministry of Health Circular 17/55 dated 23rd November, 1955, and also Circular 28/54 dated 15th December, 1954.

In addition to the tables at the end of the report the Chief Sanitary Inspector has contributed either jointly or separately to other matters in the report. It may be of interest to note that this is the twentieth report prepared by us.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

E. L. PERRY

Medical Officer of Health.



STLFF

COMMITTEES CONCERVED WITH PUBLIC HEALTH

General Purposes Committee

Public Health, Water and Highways Committee

Estates Committee

Housing Committee

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1. STATISTICS OF THE AREA

PRODUCT OF A PENNY RATE AND RATEABLE VALUE

The first and lower figure in each case is based on the old rateable value at 31.3.56, while the second and higher figure is for the new Rateable Value at 1.4.56.

 Product of a penny rate.
 at 31.3.56
 at 1.4.56

 £810
 £210,460

2. VITAL STATISTICS

BLRTH		Male	F'emale	Total
(a)	Live Births (legitimate)	14	47	91
	Live Births (illegitimate)	3	-	3
	Totals	47	47	94
	Birth rate per 1000 of the estimated			
	resident population = 9.61			
(b)	Still Births (legitimate)	2	3	5
	Still Births (illegitimate)	-	1	1
	Totals	2	4	6

Rate of still births per 1000 of
the total live and still births = 60

a) Statistics provided by the Registrar General

Causes of Death	-		
Petrolina con an	Male	Female	Total
Tuberculosis .			
Respiratory	2	-11	2
Other forms	1	-	1
Cancor			
Malignant neoplasm, stomach	4	3	7
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	3	-	3
Malignant neoplasm, breast	-	1	1
Malignant neoplasm, uterus	-	1	1
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	10	9	19
Heart diseases			
Coronary disease, angina	22	17	39
Hypertension with heart disease (high blood pressure)	1	-	1
Other heart diseases	15	25	40
Other circulatory disease	6	12	18
Respiratory diseases			
Pneumonia	3	1	4
Influenza	ma	1	1
Bronchitis	1	3	4
Other diseases of respiratory system	3	**	3
Other diseases			
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	1	2	3
Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea		1	1
Leukaemia, aleukaemia	1		1
Diabetes	1	1	2
Vascular disease of nervous system	10	26	3 6
(e.g. cerebral haemorrhage)	10	20	
Nephritis and nephrosis	3	***	3
Hyperplasia of prostate	7	-	7
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	3	15	18
Motor vehicle accidents	-	~	-
All other accidents	4	2	6
Suicide	1	1	2
Carried forward	102	121	223

(b)	(a) Brought forward Infant Mortality	102	121	223 4
	Deaths from puerperal causes	Nil	Nil	Nil
	Total deaths from all causes	104	123	227

(c) <u>Death rate per 1000 of the estimated</u> resident population = 23.1

3. INFECTIOUS DISEASES

(a)	Disease	Cases Notified	Cases admitted to Hospital	Deaths
	Scarlet Fever	1	-	-
	Whooping Cough	3	-	-
	Acute Poliomyelitis		1	
	Paralytic Non-paralytic	1 2	2	-
	Measles	5		-
	Acute Pneumonia	2	-	-
	Erysipelas	1		-
	Food Poisoning (see notes paragra	7 uph lle)	7	-
	Paratyphoid (see notes below)	1		5

Note: The case of Paratyphoid was a child who came to the district on holiday from the Midlands, and it was ascertained from the time factor that the disease must have been contracted before arriving in the district. She was in a caravan in a very isolated position, and it was decided that the conditions were suitable for isolation. After she returned home the caravan was thoroughly disinfected.

4. TUBERCULOSIS

New Cases and Mortality, 1955.

New Ca	ases Not	ified				Deatl	ns	
Age Periods	Respi	ratory	Non-F	Respiratory	Resp	iratory	Non-Re	spiratory
	M	F.	M.	F.	M.	\mathbf{F}_{ullet}	M.	\mathbf{F}_{ullet}
5-14	-	•	-	- 110	-		-	
15-24	-	- ,	-	-	-	-	-	-
25-44	1	2	-	•	1	-	-	-
45-64	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-
65 upwards	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-

5. NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE ACT, 1946.

(a) The Devon County Council are the Local Health Authority responsible for the Act under Parts II and III. The Hospital facilities under Part II have been found satisfactory.

(b) Isolation.

Cases of Infectious Disease are admitted to the Whipton Isolation Hospital at Exeter, and this arrangement has worked very well. The Medical Superintendent and staff have always been most co-operative and helpful.

(c) <u>Smallpox</u>.

A smallpox hospital at Upton Pyne, administered by the Regional Hospital Board, is available in case of need.

(d) Laboratory Facilities.

Since the Public Health Laboratory Service began to operate in 1948, the facilities have been found most useful. Dr. B. Moore, the Director at 7, Dix's Field, Exeter, has not only carried out bacteriological examinations, but has frequently visited the District to advise and help in matters of concern to both of us. It is this field work, being much more flexible than hitherto, which has been of great benefit. Needless to say our relationship with the laboratory has been most cordial.

(e) Ambulance Facilities.

These are provided by the County Council.

(f) Dental Carc of Mothers and Young Children.

These facilities are provided by the County Council.

6. NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948.

Section 47 - Removal to suitable premises of persons in need of care and attention.

One case was investigated, that of an elderly couple living in a first floor flat. The premises were found dirty and neglected, but it was not considered to be a case where statutory action for removal was necessary. It was possible to arrange some assistance in cleaning the premises and subsequent visits showed that the flat was maintained in reasonable condition.

7. WATER.

Public Supplies.

The quality of the water has again been maintained, but as was stressed last year the ever increasing demands on the supply emphasise the necessity of proceeding with the scheme for the augmentation of the supplies as reported on by the Consulting Engineers. It may be as well to briefly outline the present position in regard to storage and distribution.

The original springs at Plyford and Barnard's Farm are fed by gravity to Peak Hill Reservoir and Woolbrook Reservoir respectively. The capacity of these springs totals approximately 350,000 gallons per day, but it must be remembered that practically all houses, north of Primley, are taken off the trunk main which supplies Peak Hill Reservoir, and as most of the new building is taking place in this area, the quantity going to this reservoir is getting less each year.

Water (contd.)

Water from the first borehole at Sidford, sunk in 1940, was pumped to the Woolbrook Reservoir, and later when the second borehole came into use, in 1949, it also helped to boost the Peak Reservoir by means of an auxiliary pumping set at Sidford. Since then the demand has caught up with the added supplies and this year over 39,000,000 gallons were pumped to the reservoirs.

For a period of seven weeks during the peak of the season the pump worked non-stop and during August alone over $7\frac{1}{4}$ million gallons were pumped. This averages over 235,000 gallons per day which is almost the maximum load and leaves practically no reserve. A mechanical failure, a fractured main or a large fire during this period might be serious. The present quantity of water available is shown in the table below. Owing to the very dry summer the yield from the springs was reduced and there was also a slight drop in the borehole levels:-

	NORMAL	DURING 1955	
From springs	350,000 gals. per day	320,000 gals. per day	
From two boreholes	250,000 " " "	240,000 " " " " " 560,000	
Total	600,000	560,000	

The capacities of the two existing reservoirs is 750,000, but as will be seen from the figures below the level at Peak during August was only 4" above the minimum working level.

Capacities of Existing Reservoirs							
	Maximum			. August,	1955•		
Reservoir	Depth when full	Total Capacity	Min.Working level	<u>Level at 21.8.55</u>	In galls.		
Peak Woolbrook	12 ' 6" 6 ' 6"	500,000 250,000	4' 3" 2' 8"	<u>ሁ</u> ነ 7" ሁነ 2"	184,000 160,200		

Pump testing at the new borehole was carried out from 3rd July to 17th July, 1955, and over this period 600,000 gallons per day were pumped. This is most satisfactory as this water will prove a most useful addition to the public supplies. The bacteriological tests proved that it is of excellent purity.

It seems clear from the above figures that the new Core Hill Reservoir with its storage capacity of 500,000 gallons should be built as soon as possible as this new supply will be pumped to it, and the contemplated distribution by gravity will be:-

- (a) To Peak Hill Reservoir via a new 6" main.
- (b) To Woolbrook Reservoir by branch from the above.
- (c) To supply an area in Sidford including High Street, Brook Estates, Frys Lane and the new Mariners Estate.

The augmentation scheme allows for a supply to the village of Salcombe Regis to replace the present supply which is unsatisfactory and inadequate.

Harcombe Village.

Difficulties were again experienced during the year and at times some houses were without water or had only a very limited supply. During August a meeting of all the users of the supply was called and as a result general agreement was reached regarding the Council putting up a scheme. Subsequently your Consulting Engineers were asked to submit proposals. Some properties originally on the main supply found it necessary, owing to the lack of water, to sink wells or open up old ones, or to find alternative supplies. A few properties in the Village have always had separate private supplies.

Sidford.

A small private supply in Sidford which had been known to be doubtful was affected by the dry spell, and on examination proved to be unfit. About a dozen houses in School Street and The Cross were concerned and most of these were connected to the public supply by the end of the year.

Sidbury.

There are three private supplies in the Sidbury Parish owned by the Sidbury Manor Estate. The distribution is shown in the table below.

Distribution of Supplies

Public Supplies	
Number of properties connected to S.U.D.C. supply	3074
Number of properties connected to Honiton Hill ram	4
Number of properties with shared supplies or connected to standpipes	10 3088
Private Supplies	
Salcombe Regis - properties connected	16
Harcombe - No. of dwellinghouses connected to main supply	1.0
Other properties in Harcombe connected to other small supplies	6
Fortescue - properties connected	25
Bowd - properties connected	8
Sidbury - Ridgeway - properties connected	58
Greenhead - properties connected	85
Hetway - proporties connected	16 224
SUMMARY	
No. of inhabited houses - 3477	
Total on public supplies (including 83 new connections)	3088
Total on private supplies	224
The remaining properties, mostly in the outlying areas, have their own supplies	3312

8. DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

The Consulting Engineers (Messrs. Lewis & Duvivier) submitted an outline report on the sewerage system in October and this was subsequently discussed by the Council when Mr. Lewis attended. Proposals for dealing with the overloading of the sewers is suggested under the following headings.

- (a) Increased storage capacity.
- (b) Increased pumping capacity and disintegrator capacity.
- (c) Improved outfall arrangements.

The report points out that the existing disintegrator is quite inadequate to deal with the flow of sewage during the peak season, and this was confirmed during certain days in August when crude sewage was noted in the sea.

The tables at the end of the report prepared by the Chief Sanitary Inspector show the number of new drainage connections to the system during the year.

9. RIVERS AND STREAMS.

The regular sampling of the River Sid which had been carried out over the previous six years was discontinued as sufficient data was available as to the contamination by pathogenic organisms from the overflow at Frys Field. The information obtained was useful to the Consulting Engineers and their proposals for dealing with the sewerage system should obviate further trouble when the work is carried out. There is no industrial pollution of the River Sid or its tributaries.

10. SEA WATER.

No sampling was undertaken during the year.

11. FOOD.

(a) Meat.

There are now no slaughterhouses in the district, and since the decision not to re-licence the old private slaughterhouses was made, meat is obtained from either the Exeter City Abattoir or a private slaughterhouse in Honiton. The arrangements seem to be working satisfactorily. The future trends in slaughtering can be seen from the Interdepartmental Committee Report on Slaughterhouses received during the year. The aim is for what is called "moderate concentration", and as applied to Sidmouth would mean a new abattoir at Exeter to deal with the following districts.

District	Type of Local Authority	Population
Exeter	C.B.	77,000
Honiton	₿•	5,000
Budleigh Salterton	U.D.	4,000
Crediton	$U_{\bullet}D_{\bullet}$	4,000
Exmouth	U•D•	17,500
Ottery St. Mary	U.D.	4,000
Seaton	U.D.	3,000
Sidmouth	$U_{\bullet}D_{\bullet}$	10,000
Axminster	R.D.	14,500
Crediton	R.D.	10,000
Honiton	R.D.	7,000
St. Thomas	R.D.	<u>32,500</u>
		188,500

FOOD (a) Meat (contd.)

There would be 142 such groupings throughout the country, and although the Committee's recommendations will no doubt take a considerable time to come to fruition and may in the process be subject to considerable revision, there seems no doubt that the days of the small private slaughterhouse are numbered.

(b) Milk.

The milk supply is satisfactory, there being a modern pasteurising plant in the district which deals with a very large proportion of the milk supplied from local farms. A large number of the farms in the district are TT producers, though no figures are available. During the year a case of tuberculosis in a cow at one of the non TT farms was notified, but as the milk was being pasteurised no statutory action had to be taken. This illustrates the benefit of being in a "Special Area" in which all milk must either be 'Tuberculin Tested' or 'Pasteurised'.

(c) Ice Cream.

There are no manufacturers of ice cream in the district. All ice cream sold in the district is either prepacked by manufacturers or comes in bulk from a large producer in a neighbouring district.

During the year 26 samples were sent to the laboratory but of this number 10 results were ignored although they proved mostly satisfactory because it was found that the containers arrived at the laboratory in a leaking condition.

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
12	3	1	-	16

Food Handling Byelaws made under Section 15 Food & Drugs Act, 1938.

(d) Hotels, Restaurants, Cafes, Retail Shops.

Inspections of these premises have continued, and the number of visits is shown in Table 1 of the Sanitary Inspector's summary at the end of the report. It is being found that a general improvement is being maintained and managements have on the whole been very cooperative in adopting recommendations for improvements in equipment or techniques. Some of the larger hotels have in particular spent considerable sums of momey on improvements and fittings.

A few small cafes are not up to the standard aimed at, but generally it has been found that the main cause is due to cramped conditions, which hinders efficiency when dealing with the summer trade.

Retail shops have generally a good standard and it is pleasing to note that the use of refrigerated display cabinets is on the increase. This method of display protects from flies, dust and other sources of contamination and is a distinct advance in food hygiene technique.

Generally it can be said that the year has shown a continued improvement and it has not been necessary to take statutory action. The number of premises concerned with food are as follows.

Hotels	39
Cafes, restaurants, etc.	22
All retail food shops	82

Food (contd.)

(é) Food Poisoning.

One outbreak of food poisoning occurred when a party of two families consisting of 3 adults and four children visited the town by car on a day trip. All except a baby were taken ill a few hours after arriving with diarrhoea and vomiting, after consuming a picnic lunch. They were taken to the Victoria Cottage Hospital and enquiries revealed that ham was the only common article of diet. Subsequent laboratory examination showed that staphytococcus aureus was the organism responsible. This particular ham was decomposing when taken to the laboratory for examination and had been carried in the boot of a car from the Midlands by one family, during very hot weather, having been purchased at least three days before the meal in question. The Medical Officer of a neighbouring district where the party was staying was notified.

12. HOUSING

The housing survey of the district made necessary by the requirements of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954 was completed during the year and a report presented to the Council on the conditions found. The estimated number of houses unfit for human habitation was 40, and of this figure it is expected that 30 will be dealt with by Clearance Order procedure under Section 25 of the Housing Act 1936, while the remaining 10 by procedure under Section 11 of the same Act (individual houses). No statutory action had been taken by the end of the year.

The Ministry of Health have stated that the detailed returns are no longer required in the Annual Report as this information is available in the Quarterly Returns, so the usual tabulated statement has been omitted, but the following information is worth recording.

Houses completed during the year

(a)	By the Local Authority	NIL
(b)	By others	77
(c)	Conversions (by Local Authority) (by others)	NIL
	TOTAL	<u>78</u>

Arising out of a query by a Medical Practitioner during the year as to the proportion of bungalows and houses being built, some figures were prepared, and are included in the following tables. These figures show that since building controls were lifted in 1953 the proportion of bungalows to houses has shown a distinct upward surge, so that for 1955 the proportion is nearly two to one. There seems no doubt that the popularity of this type of dwellinghouse is directly related to the age of the occupants, many of whom are elderly persons coming to Sidmouth to retire.

Housing (contd.)

HOUSES (or Conversions) BUILT SINCE THE WAR

Houses include flats where they are new erections, otherwise flats are included under conversions.

YEAR By L.A.	By others	Totals	Control Make 7
			Grand Total
Houses Nil	Nil	Nil	
1945 Bungalows Nil	Nil	Nil	1
Conversions Nil	1	1	
Houses Nil	22	22	
1946 Bungalows Nil	1	1	25
Conversions Nil	2	2	
Houses 41	8	49	
1947 Bungalows Nil	Nil	Nil	57
Conversions 2	6 .	8	
Houses 15	Nil	15	
1948 Bungalows 25	Nil	25	78
Conversions 8	30	38	
Houses 17	15	32	
1949 Bungalows Nil	3	3	48
Conversions 6	7	13	
Houses 30	11	41	
1950 Bungalows Nil	1	1	58
Conversions 4	12	16	
Houses 22	5	27	
1951 Bungalows Nil	1	1	49
Conversions 9	12	21	
Houses 14	7	21.	
1952 Bungalows 4	1	5	41
Conversions 4	11	15	
Houses Nil	34	34	
1953 Bungalows Nil	13	13	59
Conversions Nil	12	12	
Houses Nil	38	38	
1954 Bungalows Nil	33	33	77
Conversions Nil	6	6	
Houses Nil	27	27	
1955 Bungalows Nil	50	50	78
Conversions Nil	1	1	
Totals Houses 139	167	306	
Bungalows 29	103	132	571
Conversions 33	100	133	
201	370		

13. PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

Since the modernisation of the conveniences at Port Royal and the rebuilding of those at the Triangle a better service has been provided. The provision of hot water at the Market during 1956 will further improve facilities. Attendance and maintenance during the peak holiday season is a strain, when it is realised that the premises have ten times more use than during the winter months. Seasonal female staff is a difficulty, though during the year it was possible to maintain a high standard.

14. CAMPING SITES

- (a) There are two licensed sites in the district, both in the Salcombe Regis area.
- (b) One site is controlled by Planning Permission under the Town & Country Planning Act, 1947, and the other is licensed under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936.

Frequent visits were made during the season both to the licensed sites and to other summer camps of Scouts, Girl Guides, Cadets, etc., but in no case was it necessary to take statutory action.

15. RODENT CONTROL.

Many visits were made during the year in connection with rodent control, and since a man has been available for this work it has been possible to carry out treatment promptly.

It was noticed during the test baiting of sewers that a higher proportion of "takes" was recorded, and this fact may be related to the dry summer which made the sewers more habitable for rats.

16. FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 and 1948.

l. Inspections for purposes of provision as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

Premises	Number	Number of		
	on Register	Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
1) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4, and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	32	9	1	-
2) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	48	21	-	·
3) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding Out-worker's premises).	•	-	-	-
Total	80	30	1	-

2. Cases in which defects were found.

			Referred		Number of	
Particulars	Found	Remedied	To H.M.	By H.M.	cases in	
		Inspector	Inspector	which prosecutions		
					were	
					instituted	
Want of cleanliness	-	-	-	-		
Overcrowding	-	-	-	-	-	
Unreasonable Temperature	_	-	-			
Inadequate Ventilation	-		-		-	
Ineffective drainage of floors	•••	••	-	•••	•••	
lioors						
Sanitary Conveniences						
a) Insufficient	_	-	-	-	-	
b) Unsuitable or defective	1	1	-	-	649	
c) Not separate for sexes	-	-	_	-	6-1	
Other offences against the						
Act not including offences relating to homework	-	-	_	-	_	
Total	1	1	-	bes	•••	

17. REFUSE DISPOSAL.

Towards the end of the year the refuse disposal site at Ice House Lane was filled in, and arrangements were made to obtain a site at Knapp Copse some six miles from the town. Certain preparatory works such as road laying and draining were carried out ready for tipping to commence early in the new year. This is a remote site and should provide accommodation for a very long time.

18. SANITARY INSPECTIONS OF THE AREA.

This information is contained in the tabulated statements at the end of the report and needs no elaboration.

(a) Disinfection.

Bedding and clothing is disinfected in the Equifix Steam
Disinfector at the Manstone Highway's Depot. During the year
it was necessary to carry out repairs to the boiler supplying
steam to the disinfector, and to the feed pump and other fittings.
The equipment is now in good order.

(b) Verminous Persons and Premises.

No cases were dealt with during the year.

SIDMOUTH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT, 1955.

TABLE I

General Inspections

The following table represents the summary of visits, inspections, interviews, etc., by the two Sanitary Officers during the year.

CENERAL SANITATION.	No. of
	Visits
Water Supplies (Public)	72 13 17 17 26 1 43 40 9 6 4
Drainage	
INFECTIOUS DISEASE. Enquiries in cases of I.D. Enquiries in cases of other diseases	· 28
Visits re disinfection and disinfestation	
FOOD PREMISES.	
Hotels and Guest Houses	. 67
Boarding Houses	• 43
Fishmongers	13
Bakehouses Butchers Shops.	29
Slaughterhouses Dairies and Milk Distributors Ice Cream premises Retail Food Sheps	8 30 35
Visits re Unsound Food	•
HOUSING	
Visits under Housing Act, 1936 etc., for purposes o survey (Redevelopment Area)	
Visits under Public Health and Housing Acts (excluding above)	• 3 • 97
Total Number of Housing Visits	383

TABLE II

NOTICES SERVED.

Statutory	Notices	served	1
		complied with	1

DRAINAGE

The figures below do not include Council Houses or other buildings built or maintained under the directions of the Surveyor but include all other new buildings and adaptations to existing buildings.

	No. of house drainage systems repaired, relaid or extended 7	
	No. of new water closets	_
		2
		4
	No. of drains tested (complete or renovated systems). 15	
	No. of cesspools discontinued	4
	No. of septic tanks installed	3
	1100 OI DOPULO GAIRD LIISGALAGA CONTROL CONTRO	
WATER.		
	Bacteriological samples taken 4	.5
	Chemical samples taken	7
DISINFEC	ON• · ·	
		_
	No. of premises disinfected after Notifiable disease.	5
H		りつ
27	No. of premises disinfected for other reasons Lots of bedding or clothing disinfected after	_
	Notifiable disease	6
		2
31	Lots of bedding or clothing disinfected for other	
		1
	Includes disinfestation	
27	ATTOLICE CARBATTE COUCULOIT	

UNSOUND FOOD.

The following amounts of unsound food were examined, and condemned on voluntary surrender for destruction or salvage during the year: -

Meat and Meat Products

40 Tins

5 Tins Imported Ham

80 lb. Beef 15½ lb. Liver

12 lb. Sweetbreads

30 lb. Pork Sausages
138 Pork Pies

2 Jars Tongues

2 Jars Calves Feet Jelly

4 Chickens

Fruit and Vegetables

227 Tins

30 lb. Prunes 40 lb. Apples

1 Jar Chutney

Table II (contd.)

Milk and Milk Products

- ll Tins
- 22 lb. Cheese
- 31 Egg Pies

Fish and Fish Products

- 16 Tins
- 4 stone Kippers 2 stone Smoked Haddock
- 2 Jars Crab
- 36 Packets Peeled Prawns.

